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Person falls into Lake Michigan while walking on ice shelf

"The Lake Michigan shoreline snow shelves and ice-covered piers are beautiful and inviting. And very dangerous!" South Haven authorities wrote in a Facebook post.

A person fell through the ice shelf near the South Haven pier on Wednesday, plunging them into the icy water.

South Haven Area Emergency Services (SHAES) are now reminding Michiganders to avoid walking on the ice shelves.

SHAES said they responded to the report of the person falling through the ice Wednesday night. The person was able to pull themself out of the water, authorities said.

"The Lake Michigan shoreline snow shelves and ice-covered piers are beautiful and inviting. And very dangerous!" SHAES wrote in a Facebook post.

According to Dave Benjamin, the executive director of the Great Lakes Surf Rescue Project, hidden holes in the shelf ice mounds can lead to a quick drop into the icy water with little to no chance of climbing out.

The thick ice also makes it difficult to know where the beach ends and water begins.

Falling into icy water can cause cold water shock, hyperventilation, gasping, hypothermia and death. There have been multiple reports of people falling through the ice in West Michigan this winter, some of them fatal.

And with temperatures fluctuating within the past few weeks, the ice has become even more unstable.

"In addition to that, we can have waves on the outer edges of the ice shelf, and it's pushing water underneath it, and can make it very unstable and currents underneath it," Benjamin said. "So if you were to fall through, it's a very hazardous situation to put yourself in."

Stay off ice, pier- danger lurks

The South Haven lighthouse and pier heads are attractive to sightseers, even in the winter months. But danger lurks. These scenes from Saturday were taken at South Beach. A South Haven police officer can be seen escorting folks off the pier. Earlier in the week South Haven Area Emergency Services (SHAES) responded to a report of a person falling off an ice shelf into the lake. The person was able to safely rescue.

Photo by Tom Renner.

Sub-zero temps create emergencies for public works

The recent sub-zero temperatures that have swept the area have proven to be a challenge in many ways, including burst water pipes. Public works employees have the unenviable task of responding to those types of emergencies as pictured here on Saturday in the City of South Haven. The temperature had "climbed" to two degrees when this picture was taken.

Photo by Tom Renner.

South Haven Speakers Series announces its 12th season speaker lineup

By James Windell

The South Haven Speakers Series just announced its lineup for the 2026 season – its 12th year of bringing topnotch speakers and compelling topics to South Haven.

The four programs this year address major issues that shape our world and our community.

The South Haven Speakers Series Board President Elaine Stephens noted that this season's topics and speakers were selected by the Speakers Series Board with input from past audiences. "The topics reflect issues that are crucial to what we face around the world and at our doorstep," she said. "It will be another exciting year for those attending our series and for those watching repeat broadcasts from our website and on YouTube."

Opening up the 2026 series on Thursday, April 30 will be Ambassador Bridget Brink, an American diplomat and west Michigan native who served as U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine for four years, including during the Russian invasion in 2022. Previously she served as U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia and has held positions in the State Department since 1996.

Ambassador Brink is uniquely qualified to address the central question of her talk, which is "Why Ukraine and Eastern Europe Matter." "Although the conflict in Ukraine and Eastern Europe receives less attention now," says Stephens, "developments there continue to affect our national security and economic interests, as well as global security and adherence to international law."

Stephens also points out that the U.S. faces an existential question: whether and how to support our democratic allies when Russia or another aggressor country threatens them?

On Thursday, May 14, Annie Blackwell, an astronomer at the University of Michigan, will address "How Bright Lights Endanger Starry Nights" as she describes the growing challenge of light pollution and efforts to reduce it. Research shows that light pollution

is costly, disturbing wildlife and harming human health.

Board member and author Michael McCarthy observes that brightened skies are depriving people of the stellar spectacle that has inspired humanity for ages. "During the day South Haven offers wonderful lake views and sunsets," McCarthy says. "It is possible we could provide an after-dark experience of breathtaking brilliant skies."

The fall series opens on Thursday, October 22 with Dr. Tom Ludwig, Professor of Psychology at Hope College. He will speak on the promises and perils of artificial intelligence, noting that one Microsoft CEO predicts that technological change over the next several years will reshape most jobs across nearly every industry.

Dr. Ludwig will address several important questions related to AI, including: "Will AI change what it means to be a person? Are we ready to have cheerleaders and crowds root for robot basketball teams?"

The series concludes on Thursday, November 19 with respected journalist and author Tim Alberta, who has covered the national political scene for years. His presentation – "The Art of Getting Along in a Troubled Society" – follows shortly after the midterm elections. Alberta has written for The Hotline, The Wall Street Journal, National Journal, National Review, Politico, and currently The Atlantic.

In his talk, Alberta will discuss broader cultural trends, including polarization, extremism, and the roots of unrest in American society --all of this informed by his reporting from across the country and his particular insights.

"Our Board reflects a wide range of opinions and beliefs," says Stephens, "yet we are united by a shared concern about the growing polarization of our country and the extremism and distrust we hear daily. We worry about what has happened to our ability to listen to differing viewpoints and to treat one another with dignity and respect.

"In bringing Alberta to South Haven, we wanted a speaker with both depth of knowledge and strength of conviction – someone who could help us understand what's happening within the broader context of cultural and societal trends. Tim Alberta's credentials and background are an excellent fit, and his subtle sense of humor promises to bring a welcome lightness to a challenging topic."

All South Haven Speakers Series presentations will be held at Lake Michigan College — South Haven Campus. Refreshments are available at 6:30 p.m.and all programs start at 7:00 p.m.

All programs are recorded for later viewing on the Speakers Series website and YouTube channel.

For more information, visit the Speakers Series website at southhavenspeakersseries.org.

South Haven School Board unanimously approves teachers salary agreement

By James Windell

The South Haven School Board unanimously approved the salary agreement for teachers at the regular School Board meeting on January 21, 2026.

The teacher's union had already ratified the agreement on January 13, 2026 after the School District and the teachers came to an agreement on January 8, 2026.

According to the South Haven Public School's Finance Administrator, Nancy Nelson, all teachers will advance a salary step based on their years of public school teaching experience.

"The increases are being covered by grants and funds," Nelson told the School Board. "Mostly they will be covered by At Risk grant money that is aimed at teacher retention. We also have another grant, the 27-L Educator Compensation which is a one-time grant for this year."

Section 27l ("27-L") Educator Compensation in Michigan is a state-funded program that gives school districts extra money – roughly $44 to $50 per pupil – to increase educator pay. It is one-time funding distributed through the State School Aid Act and can be used flexibly for salaries, bonuses, or other compensation enhancements.

During the meeting, South Haven School Superintendent Ana Aleman-Putman said that negotiations proved to be a "good collaboration" with the teachers. "Teaching is like no other job because it takes so much from you," she said. "Then you have to give more when you go home and sometimes you don't much to give. So, we try to honor that; Nancy and I went back and forth with them and we came up with a good solution."

Nelson said she agreed with the Superintendent. "I thought it was a good conversation and I appreciate the patience because we had to wait for a budget, and then we had to go from there."

School Board Member Doug Ransom, who is Treasurer for the Board and also Chair of the Finance & Facilities Committee, said it was expedient to get an agreement approved. However, he acknowledged that these are challenging times.

"There are a lot of uncertainties moving forward," Ransom said, "because anything related to the federal government makes it a real challenging time. So, we have challenges that we have to keep an eye on. My position is that we have to be very diligent about the budget and we have to make sure that we are reactive if there is bad news. However, I feel confident that Nancy and I have the ability to work that out if there are challenges."

Ransom added he was excited about the agreement because "I think it addresses an area that was a major concern."

Aleman-Putman reminded the Board that they were in the third year of a three-year contract with the teachers and new negotiations would begin again later this year.

Community Foundation endowments created to benefit organizations

Pictured, left to right: Mary Sue Lyon, President of SH Theatre Series; Bob Linstrom, President of SH Performance Series; Bob Copping, President of SHOUT for South Haven; Jim Marcoux, Executive Director of SH Area Community Foundation; Elaine Stephens, President of SH Speakers Series.

Four civic organizations who in recent years have contributed in so many positive ways to the quality of life in the South Haven community are being assured a lasting future through endowments recently created by the South Haven Area Community Foundation.

The endowments announced by Jim Marcoux, Executive Director of the Foundation, will benefit SHOUT for South Haven, the South Haven Performance Series, the South Haven Speakers Series and the South Haven Theatre Series.

The idea to create the endowments originated with Robert (Bob) Copping, founder of SHOUT for South Haven and the inspiration behind creating the three Series.

"Generous donors have supported the operational needs of these organizations over the years and that will need to continue," said Copping. "My hope is that income from these new endowments will allow each Series to continue to enhance their offerings to the community while maintaining affordable admission fees."

Copping was recently the recipient of the 2025 Governor George Romney Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his community advocacy.

The Jane Goldwood Copping Endowment for the South Haven Performance Series specifically honors Bob's wife whose love of classical music was the inspiration for its founding.

Founded in 2011 and with assets over $7.1 million, the South Haven Area Community Foundation is dedicated to enriching the quality of life in the greater South Haven area by securing its future through endowments. The Foundation in 2025 distributed more than $142,000 to 25 local non-profit organizations.

"The South Haven Area Community Foundation is dedicated to enriching the quality of life in the greater South Haven area for its residents and visitors by securing its future through endowments," said Marcoux. "For many decades Bob Copping has dedicated his life to making a difference — in his community, his state, his nation, and the world so creating these endowments is so fitting. They are another example of his vision for the future of our community."

"Our hope is that patrons of these Series will consider legacy gifts in honor of their favorite Series," said Marcoux. "This can be done through a variety of ways such as a direct donation, a legacy gift or thru estate planning. The Foundation is ready to assist donors in better understanding the various means."

The Foundation can be reached by calling 269-815-4223 or by email to execdirector@southhavencf.org.

SHOUT FOR SOUTH HAVEN

Inspired by Bob Copping and his late wife Jane, SHOUT to this day is engaged in a way that initiates new paths in the community, projects that otherwise might not see the light of day. The projects funded through hundreds of thousands of dollars in private contributions are numerous. – among them the bridge flowers, downtown sculptures, SHOUT park, the Wilhelm Baum tugboat, signature street clocks, beach benches and most recently the winter fireplace gathering place in Dyckman Park. SHOUT was the inspiration for the creation of the summer Waterfront Concerts, the Cottage Walk, Performance Series, Theatre Series and Speakers Series. The magic of all this has been that each organization is comprised entirely of community-minded volunteers.

SOUTH HAVEN PERFORMANCE SERIES

Founded in 2010, the South Haven Performance Series is dedicated to contributing to the cultural fabric of the community by providing a rich mixture of exemplary classical music and the performing arts for residents and visitors of South Haven, along with performance art education opportunities for local youth.

SOUTH HAVEN SPEAKERS SERIES

Founded in 2014, the South Haven Speakers Series is dedicated to bringing insightful and informative speakers to our community. Its mission is centered on Issues, Innovations, and Ideas Shaping Our Lives.

SOUTH HAVEN THEATRE SERIES

The South Haven Theatre Series, Inc. was founded in 2018 as an initiative of SHOUT to bring live, professional theatre to the community. Its vision would be to enhance the cultural life of South Haven through the staging of one-night theatrical performances.

Paw Paw Township Board approves Paw Paw Senior Center assistant position

PAW PAW - The Paw Paw Township Board on Monday, Jan. 12, approved a Paw Paw Senior Center assistant position with a pay rate of $15 an hour for an average of 3.5 hours, three days a week, and to cover for the activities director during vacation or training.

In another area, township board member, Dennis Reynolds, presented the Paw Paw Fire Department report for December and said seven Paw Paw Township calls were reported during that month. He said for the year, the department ended with 357 calls total, 93 of which were for Paw Paw Township.

Board members approved the 2026-2027 fire budget.

Reyolds also told the board of road safety issues that were created Jan. 2,by the Van Buren County Road Commission's lack of cleaning and salting. Reynolds said the road commission did not start clean up until after 4 p.m., despite being asked for help from first responders and law enforcement throughout the day.

Scholarship available for PPHS baseball players

The Kirk "Shoney" Schonwald Baseball Scholarship has been established to honor the legacy of Kirk Schonwald, a 1976 graduate of Paw Paw High School and lifelong baseball fan who believed deeply in grit, loyalty, and perseverance. This annual scholarship, awarded in the amount of $1,076, supports a graduating Paw Paw High School senior who has played baseball or plans to remain involved in the sport, demonstrates strong character and resilience, and shows financial need. Applicants must submit a 300–500 word essay addressing the importance of baseball in their life, what good character means to them on and off the field, and a personal example of resilience. Essays must be emailed to bcrawfordkc@gmail.com by March 26, 2026, which coincides with Opening Day of the Major League Baseball season. The scholarship is provided by his daughter, Brandi Schonwald Crawford-Johnson, and his grandson, Thomas William Crawford, to honor his lifelong passion for baseball and commitment to perseverance.

Church to hold Soup and Salad Supper, Saturday, Jan. 31

The Almena United Methodist Church will hold a Soup and Salad Supper, Saturday, Jan. 31, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Almena United Methodist Church, 27503 County Road 375, Paw Paw. A variety of soups, salads, bread, and dessert will be available. A free will offering will be accepted

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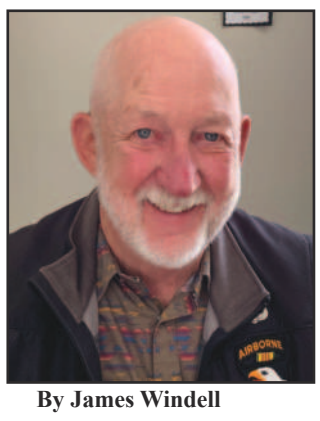
2ND FRONT PAGE

Local author's new book just released



By James Windell

As Leo Flory tells it, he never thought about writing anything more than his name through much of his life. Then, several decades after serving in Vietnam, he was inspired to write about his experiences as a combat medic after being drafted into the Army.

That resulted in his first book, which was first published in 2013 and republished in 2023 as "101st Airborne Combat Medic: Transition to Duty." In the book, Flory's ability to not only remember incidents that happened decades ago, but his knack for telling stories serves him well as he recounts in realistic detail the experiences and perspectives of a young soldier in the Vietnam conflict.

"Many interesting and fun events have come from that writing, for which I am thankful," Flory, a South Haven resident, said recently. "I was satisfied that that book would be the end of any literary quest for me."

But never say never. In the summer of 2023, thinking about movies he had seen over the years, he had a vision of a story that he felt compelled to tell. "In a matter of minutes, I envisioned three primary scenes," he recalls. "All I needed to do was fill in the blanks between them."

That feeling in the blanks became his second book, "On the Slow Lam," which will be published on February 1, 2026, by Elm Grove Publishing.

My primary character, a relatively smart young man named Nicholas Finn, has returned home after a traumatic army tour in Vietnam," Flory says about his novel. "He simply wants to return to work and save enough money to go to a university. While doing this, a bizarre incident occurs that puts him in a minimum-security prison, doing undeserved time. He has an opportunity to simply walk out of jail and that is when he goes on the lam. What I describe as a slow lam. After that, there is no dull moment as Finn and his girlfriend Annika pursue justice."

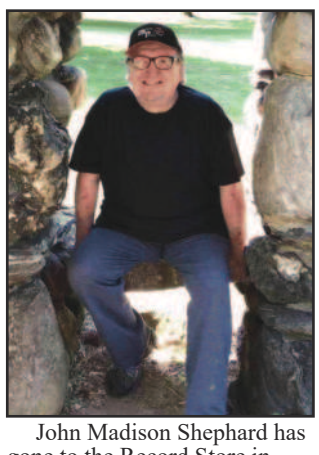
At the age of 75, Flory says he did all of his regular work during the day, but simply quit watching TV at night while filling in the blanks of a novel for nine months. "My wife Ann is my first line of defense against the English language and first to edit each chapter," he says. "She first cursed me for putting her in that position, but that turned into great encouragement to continue with each new chapter."

He adds that the entire process of writing a novel has been an "absolute blast" and he looks forward to whatever will come from the publication of this second book.

"On the Slow Lam" will be available February 1, 2026, at many bookstores and online at Barnes and Noble and Amazon.com as well as directly from the publisher, Elmgrovepublishing.com.

OBITUARIES

John Madison Shephard



John Madison Shephard has gone to the Record Store in the Sky where he is met with love by so many including his parents (Charles and Anne nee Gluchacki), his wife (Ann Hague-Shephard), his five brothers (Chuck, Steve, Bob, Joe, Jim), and his best friend Klop. He left behind his twins Katie and Chelsea, their respective partners Brian and Rodrigo, his sister Lexie, nieces and nephews (nephMANYs as he called them since they are so numerous), his confidant Lou, friends, former customers, and others from his 70-year orbit.

Born March 6, 1955, a proud Pisces, John always felt like a fish out of water. All his siblings had a close-in-age pair, but not John—plus he was the only C-section. When learning about the famous quote "No Man's an Island," his middle school classmate replied, "except Shep."

John opened his beloved Bop Stop Record Shop in April 1985 right around the time he and Ann found out they were expecting a baby. The baby turned out to be twin girls—the most unusual offspring John could have since both families were full of mostly boys and had no history of twins. He put a baby picture of the twins in the store labeled "Owners." He taught his daughters to dream, communicate about anything, that swear words were just adult words, that love was everything, and so much more.

John was also a writer and went by many names—Bopper, John E. Bop, Buddha Worthmore, Poppa Bop, Juan Shephardo. His magazine The Bag was a countercultural hit and he saved at least one person's life with the suicide issue. He spoke his own language, coined Shepanese Johnsense. With his unique sense of humor, he once made a room full of professional comedians laugh. His personal philosophy involved uncanny, if not jarringly cool, coincidences and seeing lots of cosmically wacky connections with numbers.

John enjoyed long road trips and visited all 48 contiguous states that way. He loved baseball, and always rooted for the Detroit Tigers after losing a bet he made against them once as a kid. In the same magical year he met the love of his life and mother of his children, the Detroit Tigers won the World Series.

He was one-of-a-kind, hilarious, creative, loving, a basket full of contradictions, an artist, a rock music encyclopedia, a mentor, a great dad, and a human being.

He was so loved and will be so missed.

A Celebration of Life will take place during his birthday weekend. It will be held Saturday March 7th in Kalamazoo, MI exact location TBD. Arrangements entrusted to Family First Funeral & Cremation Services, Marcellus, MI 49067.

Mother Bessie Maxine Dye Boyd

Mother Bessie Maxine Dye Boyd September 14, 1925 – January 16, 2026

It was After a magnificent century of life— spanning 100 years, 4 months, and 2 days—Mother Bessie Maxine Dye Boyd, our beloved matriarch and community treasure, peacefully passed into the arms of her Savior on Friday, January 16, 2026, at 12:40 a.m.

While her earthly journey has concluded, her profound legacy of faith and enduring love continues to live on.

The third of five daughters, Mother Bessie was born to John Richard and Willie Mae Hester Dye in Hallsville, Texas, on September 14, 1925. Following the early passing of her mother when Bessie was only eight, she was nurtured by her father and maternal grandparents, Mount and Rosie (Newhouse) Hester.

In 1946, following her graduation from Galilee High School in Hallsville, Texas, Mother Bessie traveled to South Haven, Michigan, to visit her sister and brother-in-law, Vernilla and Horace Arrington. What began as a brief stay soon became her permanent residence. During an era when the region was celebrated as the "Catskills of the Midwest," she established a reputation for hard work, serving as a housekeeper at Liders Resort and a janitor at the Michigan Movie Theater.

In 1947, a young Mother Bessie joined Emmanuel Community Church under Pastor Robert Fanning, marking the start of a storied legacy. For the next several decades, she served as a heartbeat in the congregation. Whether she was meticulously managing records as the church clerk, working behind the scenes in support of the Annual Spring Tea, or teaching Sunday School, her influence was everywhere. She truly lived the Gospel, serving as a pillar of integrity who mentored the youth and ensured that those without a ride always had a way to worship.

In 1952, Mother Bessie made history as one of the first three African American clerks hired by the G.C. Murphy Company in South Haven. Recognized for her unwavering dedication, she received numerous commendations, including two gold watches and two trips to the company headquarters—which marked some of her first airplane flights.

Eight years later, in 1960, she was united in holy matrimony to Samuel Young, with whom she shared 32 years of marriage and raised two children, Samuel David, Jr. and Barbara Jean. After a distinguished 34-year career with G.C. Murphy Company, she chose to retire to care for her husband as his health declined, remaining by his side until his passing in 1992.

Mother Bessie found love again with Deacon Willie Boyd of La Porte, Indiana, marrying him on July 3, 1999, and welcoming four adult stepdaughters and one stepson; and two sisters-in-law. Throughout their eight years of marriage, they were inseparable—serving together in ministry at the House of Praise Church, traveling to visit loved ones, and enjoying the simple pleasure of dining out. They remained devoted to one another until his passing in October 2007.

Mother Bessie's life was defined by her commitment to others. Through her work with the NAACP and her volunteer efforts with the Region 4 Area Agency on Aging, she became a lifeline for local seniors, providing them with necessary transportation and help with daily chores. This dedication earned her the title of Older Adult Volunteer of the Year.

Her faith remained at the center of her journey; she was celebrated during Women's History Day in 2004 and reached a significant spiritual milestone in 2008 when Pastor M.G. Hunt ordained her as a deacon at Greater Harvest Full Gospel Church. Together, these honors reflect a woman who truly lived out her devotion to her community and her God.

The highlight of her centennial year was a grand celebration held at Lakeside Social on September 27, 2025. This milestone was more than a birthday to Mother Bessie; she viewed it as her "Miss America" moment and her grand coronation. The joy of that day stayed with her, and she took great delight in asking friends and family, "Did you attend the crowning?"

A testament to her influence, Mother Bessie's 100th birthday featured formal proclamations from every level of government and community leadership. She was personally recognized by Joey Andrews of the State of Michigan, Commissioner Gail Patterson-Gladney of the Van Buren County Board, Bishop Dorothy Sherrod of the Black History Leadership Society, and Mayor Annie Brown of the City of South Haven.

As the honored matriarch and final surviving member of the esteemed Dye, Hester, and Newhouse generation, Mother Bessie was the guardian of a rich family legacy. She was preceded in death by her parents, John R. and Willie Mae Dye; her grandparents, Mount and Rosie Hester; and her beloved husbands, Samuel Young and Willie Boyd. She also joins her four siblings in eternal rest: Vernilla Dye Arrington Howard (Clarence), Rosa Mary Dye May (Anthony Jr.), both of South Haven; Jimmie Dye Wabington (Elmo) of Houston, Texas; and Ethel R. Dye Johnson (Luther) of Dallas, Texas.

She leaves to cherish her memory her son, Keith Young; her grandchildren, Barbie Makura, Amy Pearson, Angela Pearson, Crystal Wilson, Sam Wilson, Kenny Jenkins, and Larry Jenkins; and her in-laws, Mattie Cotton and George Boyd. Her memory will also be treasured by her thirteen nieces: Tonda Nater, Anthonette Cox, Debra Brown, Rosalind (Elder Guy) Davis, Rosetta (Mark) Moore, Nancy (Ray) Boone, Tameka Johnson, Denise (Kenneth) Roberts, Regina (John) Fleming, Cheryl (Timothy, Sr.) Daniels, Vickie Wabington-Thibodaux, and special niece Vera Harris. She also leaves six nephews: John Young, Anthony III (Anne) May, Jerry Johnson, Reverend Darryl (Betty) Johnson, Jimmy Browder, and Mark Browder.

Mother Bessie's legacy further extends through multiple generations of great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. She also leaves behind a host—too numerous to name—of great, great-great, and even great-great-great nieces and nephews, all of whom carried a piece of her heart.

Deeply rooted in Mother Bessie's life was her beloved Emmanuel Community Church family. Though the church has since disbanded, the bonds remain unbroken. She forever cherished the memories of those who remain: Minister Steven and Sister Joyce Dinkins; Brother Alfred and Sister Marie Hawkins; Sisters Ida Sledge, Lucille Mackerel, Beverly Langston, Joyce Walker, Marjorie Stevenson Brown, Latonya Langston, Gladys Thomas, and Laura White; and Brother RT Whitmore.

Mother Bessie was a beacon of inspiration, proving that age is never a barrier to making a difference. Her life demonstrated that every act of kindness leaves a lasting mark. May her legacy of love, mentorship, and dedication continue to inspire us, proving that steady faith and perseverance—even from small beginnings and through life's many challenges—create an eternal impact.

A visitation will be held Friday, January 30 from 11 am to 12 pm at Lily of the Valley Church, 30600 M-140, Covert, MI with a service to follow at 12 pm.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Filbrandt Chapel-Starks Family Funeral Homes and Cremation Services. 269-637-0333.

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Professor touts gun crime intelligence centers for reducing violence

By James Windell

Speaking via Zoom to a Scott Club audience on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, Dr. Alaina DiBiasi said that Detroit's homicide rate fell below 200 for 2025.

There may be a very good reason for this historic decrease in homicides in a city that once gained a reputation as the murder capital of U.S. cities. At one point in the 1970s, Detroit registered more than 700 murders in a year.

DiBiasi, who is an Assistant Professor in Wayne State University's Criminology and Criminal Justice Department and who specializes in firearm violence, law enforcement data, and violence prevention, has collaborated with the Detroit Police Department in evaluating and implementing violence prevention measures.

In her talk to Scott Club members, she pointed to perhaps a key reason why homicides have decreased so dramatically in the Motor City.

"A key initiative," DiBiasi said, "is the Detroit Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC), which has been fully operational since January 2020 and funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance."

CGIC focuses on evidence-based, intelligence-led policing to reduce gun violence, with the primary tool being crime gun intelligence. "Crime gun intelligence systematically collects and analyzes firearm-related data to support real-time and long-term law enforcement decisions," DiBiasi explained.

Two major federal systems are important to the CGIC. One is the Firearms Tracing System, which tracks guns recovered from crime scenes, identifying original buyers and supporting trafficking investigations using the "time to crime" metric. The other is the National Integrated

Professor Alaina Dabiasi

Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN). NIBIN digitally analyzes cartridge cases and test fires from crime scenes and through this can help police departments connect shootings via unique ballistic "fingerprints."

DiBiasi said that NIBIN does not require recovery of the firearm itself – only cartridge cases. This, she said, makes it a powerful tool for connecting incidents across time and place.

She went on to point out that states with mandated NIBIN entry see more connections and actionable leads. Also, CGICs are inter-agency collaborations, between local, state, and federal agencies, that follow Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives' (ATF) standards, and that emphasize quick, complete evidence entry and producing actionable leads within 48 hours.

What all of this means, DiBiasi said, is that shooting investigations in Detroit can be accelerated by linking apparently unrelated incidents, identifying suspects, and improving arrest and clearance rates. Also, CGIC supports broader analysis of gun violence patterns, resource targeting, and trafficking detection.

Using data from her own research in Detroit, she said her research shows a significant increase in clearance rates for fatal and nonfatal shootings in Detroit since CGIC was implemented and even as national clearance rates have declined.

Right now, there is only one formal CGIC in Michigan – the one in Detroit – and future expansion of such programs are limited by a current lack of funding opportunities. However, with the success of the CGIC in Detroit, other Michigan cities with high violence rates may well embrace crime gun intelligence centers to reduce gun violence.

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Zoet a scoring machine for South Haven

August Zoet scored 24 goals for South Haven's soccer team

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — August Zoet won't ever forget the 2025 soccer season at South Haven when he led the Rams to a state runnerup finish.

Zoet scored 24 goals for South Haven. He had two goals against North Pointe in the second round of regionals.

"I think I've had some sort of reputation," Zoet said of his scoring success. I'm not doing much dribbling out there. I take one touch, then the shot."

This was his first year on varsity despite being a senior.

"I didn't pay last year and the two other years I played JVs," Zoet said. "I scored 25 to 30 goals for JV,"

Zoet focused on football for the 2024 season and skipped soccer. But with a new coach last fall, he decided to come back to soccer.

For football, he kicked on field goals and kickoffs. "I had multiple field goals," he said "Last year I had a 47-yard field goal. This year I believe my farthest was 40. I have a good leg."

Zoet contributed much of the success of South Haven's 2025 soccer team to the play of the midfield.

"I feel no matter how good the other team is, we match their skill and beat them by one," he said.

Paw Paw boys score two wins

Truman Brennan

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Paw Paw's boys basketball team was 2-1 last week and enjoyed wins on Friday and Saturday.

On Tuesday Jan. 20, Paw Paw lost to Edwardsburg 51-43.

Coach Aaron Beery said his payer of the game was Truman Brennan

"The Red Wolves struggled in the second half to put the ball in the basket," Beery said. "Despite consistently getting to the rim, the Red Wolves only shot eight free throws all night while the Eddies benefited from going to the stripe 20 times for 15 of their points.

On Friday, Jan 23, Paw Paw beat Sturgis 65-19.

Player of the Game was Kaeline Tate.

"The Red Wolves bounced back in a big way," Beery said. "They only gave up 19 points to the Trojans, which included only to points given up in the entire third quarter. Dominant game from start to finish for the Red Wolves."

On Saturday, Paw Paw won 55-48 over Traverse City West at Cadillac High School in the John MacDonald Memorial Showcase.

Player of the Game Truman Brennan,

"The Red Wolves traveled up north to play a good D1 opponent," Beery said. "The Red Wolves led at halftime 29-19. The Titans were able to tie the game up in the third quarter as the Red Wolves struggled to put points on the board due to going scoreless for the first five minutes of the third quarter.

"In the fourth quarter, the Red Wolves found their groove in a back and forth quarter where the Red Wolves eventually took a four-point lead in the closing minutes and held on hitting some clutch free throws to avoid a Titans comeback."

The Red Wolves will play Grand Rapids Catholic Central on Tuesday and Vicksburg on Friday this coming week.

Bangor competitive cheer team continues to improve

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — Bangor competitive cheer coach Brittany Marbut has been extremely happy with the way her Bangor competitive cheer team continues to improve.

"We have our third SAC conference meet on Thursday Jan/ 29," she said. "Our scores have improved roughly 100 points so far since the beginning of the season. We look forward to continuing the improvement throughout the rest of the season.

"We have a competition at Coloma (Feb. 2) and our Conference Finals will be at Delton Kellogg (Feb. 5)," Marbut said.

Bangor did not have any competition last week.

Bangor competes in three rounds during competition for each meet for scoring purposes

The objective in the three rounds is as follows:

Round 1: Cheerleaders show off their jumping skills and ability to choreograph motions.

Round 2: Cheerleaders perform a precision drill, tumbling, jumping, and flexibility.

Round 3: Cheerleaders perform stunts.

Mattawan girls seeking more wins

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Mattawan's girls basketball team was scheduled to have full slate of games this week.

Mattawan was set to play on Tuesday at Portage Northern.Wednesday st home against St. Joseph and Friday against Battle Creek Central

Mattawan competes in the Southwestern Michigan Athletic Conference and is currently 0-5 in the league and 2-6 overall.

"Our league is very competitive top to bottom, with most conference games being decided by single digits regardless of the matchup," coach Rob Kurtz said. "Four of our five league losses have been by five points or less. We've had three games canceled so our schedule will be packed with make-up games during the final five weeks of the season."

A road game at Stevensville-Lakeshore for Jan. 23 was postponed.

The last game Mattawan played as on Jan. 16 in a hoime loss to Richland Gull Lake.

Mattawan hockey remains in first place

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Mattawan's hockey team entered this week with a record of 16-3-1 overall and was tied for first place in the South Central High School League with a 4-0-1 record.

Kalamazoo Loy Norris is in second place in the league at 5-1-1 and 14-6-1 Portage Northern is third at 3-3-0 and 10-9-0. Okemos is fourth at 3-3-0 and 7-11-1. DeWitt is fifth at 0-2 and 12-8-0 and Richland Gull Lake is 0-6-0 and 1-17-0.

"We just had the league skills competition, this Saturday is Hockey fights for kids with Autism - 14th annual event," hockey spokesman Jon Stork said. "Mattawan plays Jenison, next Wednesday is in the Renberger Cup vs. Portage, then we are in a large Showcase in Trenton that is by Invite where we play Super 10 ranked teams."

The game with Jenison was on Jan. 24 and Mattawan took a 4-0 win.

This Saturday Mattawan plays the Kalamazoo Portage team in the Wings Event Center at 7:30 p.m.

Bangor overwhelms Benton Harbor

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — Bangor's girls basketball team earned a 49-25 win over Benton Harbor in its most recent contest on Jan. 21.

Alexis Wiesniewski had 14 points for Bangor while Cielo Maldonado added nine points.

Wiesniewski had five field goals and six free throws. She scored six points in the second quarter and four in the fourth. Maldonado had four field goals and one free throws.

Bangor also had a strong rebounding game with Izzy Borvah bringing down 11 boards and Maldonado, Amiyeh Corona and K. Campbell having six boards apiece.

The Bangor defense also had a sharp game. Wiesniewski had 12 steals while Belle Macedo had six.

Bangor led 12-4 after the first quarter 23-12 at halftime and 34-12 after the third quarter.

A scheduled game for Jan. 22 a Comstock was postponed.

Bangor had two home games this week: with Lawrence on Jan. 27 and with Marcellus on Jan. 30.

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VIEWPOINT

Greenland Matters to U.S. Security — But Its People Should Choose Its Future

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX
PUBLISHER

My son and I have always toyed with the idea of living in Greenland. I being drawn to the heat, couldn't survive 50 degrees below zero. My son on the other hand is drawn towards the cold and has fancied a long stay in Nuuk, Greenland's capital.

So it is with keen interest that a major topic of conversation at the world level is Trump's play to annex Greenland.

In the 21st-century great-power competition, few pieces of real estate attract as much geopolitical interest as Greenland — and for good reason. Perched in the High North between North America and Europe, the island commands the gateway to the Arctic and plays a crucial role in monitoring the strategic approaches from Russia and, increasingly, China. U.S. defense planners understand this better than most: Greenland's location has been integral to North American defense since World War II, and the U.S. military presence there continues to underpin early-warning, missile defence, and space-surveillance operations critical to NATO and U.S. strategic interests.

The island's geography also anchors the GIUK Gap — a naval choke point defined by Greenland, Iceland and the United Kingdom that has been pivotal in tracking Russian naval movements since the Cold War. As the Arctic warms and competition over shipping lanes and resources intensifies, that strategic lens becomes ever sharper.

Yet this strategic calculus must never overshadow another fundamental truth: Greenland is not a pawn — it is home to about 56,000 people with their own history, culture and political aspirations. Greenland is a self-governing territory within the Kingdom of Denmark; its people have the legal right to choose their own future, including eventual independence or new partnerships. The Greenlandic government has repeatedly asserted that no negotiations about territorial status or security agreements should proceed without them sitting at the table.

Indeed, when asked whether they want to become part of the United States, a striking 85 % of Greenlanders said no in a recent poll. Only about 6 % expressed support for U.S. annexation, and a clear majority voiced their preference to remain within the Danish realm or pursue their own sovereign path.

That reality should prompt serious reflection in Washington. A strong partnership with Greenland — one that respects its autonomy and aspirations — serves U.S. security far better than coercive or unilateral ambitions. The U.S. already enjoys robust access for military cooperation under existing defense agreements with Denmark; this suffices to maintain strategic capabilities without upending regional relationships or risking a diplomatic rupture with European allies.

The argument that Greenland should choose its alignment is not just a moral one — it is also strategic. Partnerships grounded in mutual consent are more resilient and effective. They build trust, encourage cooperation on shared challenges like Arctic environmental change and resource management, and avoid the backlash that comes with perceived imperialism. If Greenland chooses a closer security relationship with the United States — or even an eventual shift towards European frameworks — that decision would carry far more legitimacy and durability than one imposed by external pressure.

In short, Greenland's strategic importance to U.S. defense is undeniable. Its location, its role in missile warning systems, and its position in Arctic geopolitics make it a pillar of North American and NATO security. But strategic value does not confer ownership of people or place. A responsible U.S. foreign policy should champion Greenland's right to self-determination, foster equitable cooperation, and recognize that the strongest alliances are those freely chosen.

It seems President Trump has backed down from his Greenland position that makes the large island a territory of the United States, in favor of a large strategy that would include U.S. military defenses all over the Arctic region. He and the NATO Secretary General, Mark Ruud, seem to be working that out. I hope they succeed.

Sheriff's Report- Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Reserve Division receives donation

"I would like to give a huge shout out to Section 1776 for the donation to our Reserve Division. The money they donated was put to good use for different items they needed. Thank you," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott.

"Our Reserve Division ended 2025 with 3,463 hours worked/given back to the community. The Reserve Division here is top notch and gives a lot back to the community and office. Thank you, Reserve deputies, for all you do," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a domestic situation in Almena Township in which a handgun was being fired off. "The suspect fled prior to arrival but later turned himself in to face the charges. It was a very dangerous situation that could have ended tragically but fortunately did not," said Sheriff Abbott. The suspect was lodged on several felony charges.

"As many of you know, we use Reach the Forgotten Ministry in our facility. They reached a milestone on March 18, making it to their 60th year mark working in the jails. RTF last year alone distributed 23,000 plus Bibles and Christian books to incarcerated inmates in the 32 Michigan Jails they serve in. They had 11,000 plus Bible courses completed by reaching over 50,000 inmates! I personally cannot thank them enough for what they have done in our jail to help change the lives of individuals that have been incarcerated here. I've personally seen RTF change lives, which ultimately betters our community. They are funded through donations to serve inside the walls here. They do a fundraiser in the county every year to help operate RTF. Unless things change, it'll be May 7 this year and we hope to keep filling the room up with more people attending with the trend we are seeing attending it. Every year, we see larger numbers attending the banquet. As the date gets closer, I'll get more information about it," said Sheriff Abbott.

Congratulations to Paul Tessar for being promoted this week to sergeant in our Corrections Division. "Sgt. Tessar brings a lot of experience to his new position, and we are excited for him in his new role," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a stabbing call in Waverly Township. Upon arrival, deputies located the suspect as well as the victim. The stab wound was not life threatening. While the suspect (girlfriend) was being patted down during the arrest, methamphetamine was located on her person. She was lodged on several charges for the incident. The victim is expected to make a full recovery as the injury was not major.

Uniform Response assisted the Paw Paw Fire Department with a semi fire in which the trailer was loaded with lithium-ion batteries. "No injuries happened during the incident. Numerous other agencies assisted on this as well. Great team work once again by everyone involved," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a UDAA in Bloomingdale Township. The vehicle was able to be tracked by On-Star after being stolen. Kalamazoo County Sheriff's deputies located the vehicle which was still occupied in Comstock. Kalamazoo County Sheriff's deputies lodged the male and female on charges. They will face charges in our county for the incident as well. "Once again, it's great to see agencies working together for results like this. It should be noted that the foot impressions were matched at the scene of the crime to the shoes the suspect was wearing when caught in Comstock," said Sheriff Abbott.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gutting Roadless Protections Will Cost Taxpayers, Increase Fire Risk, and Harm Our Health

Dear Editor:

I'm a mother of three and a recently retired nurse with years of experience supporting families with at-risk newborns. I've seen how wildfire smoke from hundreds of miles away increases the number of Michiganders sent to emergency rooms with asthma attacks and breathing troubles. In recent summers, emergency department visits for asthma were 17% higher than expected during continuous wildfire smoke days.

That's why I'm worried about the proposal to repeal the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule. The roadless rule limits new roadbuilding in some of the wildest parts of our national forests. It was adopted partly because the U.S. Forest Service already had more than 380,000 miles of roads and a multibillion-dollar maintenance backlog. Repealing it would invite more development into remote areas, increase human-caused wildfire ignitions, and saddle taxpayers with the bill for even more roads the agency can't afford to maintain.

Michiganders already struggle with asthma. According to 2021 data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 11.5% of Michigan residents are living with asthma, compared with 7.7% nationally. Fine particle pollution from wildfire smoke is especially hard on people with asthma and heart or lung disease. When the air turns hazy, they can't just stay inside. Many still have to get to work, school, and medical appointments, often living in older homes without proper filtration.

There are real forest health needs, and we do need to reduce fuels and protect communities from fire. But repealing the roadless rule isn't the answer. The existing rule already allows hazardous fuels reduction, prescribed burning, and other wildfire mitigation projects. Instead of spending scarce dollars punching new roads into remote backcountry, we should fix the roads we have, focus treatments near communities, and keep our children from breathing even more smoke.

Suzanne Steinrueck
South Haven

Career Politicians Broke Your Budget. Chris Moraitis Has the Common Sense and Courage to Fix It

While you've been choosing between groceries and gas, career politicians have been choosing higher taxes, more spending, and bigger government. Remember the 20-cent-per-gallon gas tax increase? That didn't happen by accident.

Excessive spending and taxation - combined with expansive, unnecessary regulations - have crippled small businesses across Michigan and discouraged new growth.

Chris Moraitis understands a simple economic truth:

What you tax, you discourage. What you subsidize, you encourage.

Michigan heavily taxes work, savings, and investment - the very building blocks of prosperity. That's why Chris will fight for lower taxes through a smaller, more efficient government.

At the same time, Michigan subsidizes bureaucracy, non-work, and debt - the stumbling blocks to prosperity. That's why Chris will fight to rein in government spending and restore fiscal discipline.

Chris Moraitis isn't a career politician with a teleprompter and empty promises. Raised by a single mother who worked hard to support her family, Chris learned early what it means to go without. He knows the government didn't save his family - hard work, faith, personal re-sponsibility, and individual initiative did.

Today, Chris runs a successful small business right here in Paw Paw. He built it through long hours and hard work - not government handouts.

Chris is the kind of leader Michigan needs in Lansing: someone who understands that eve-ry tax dollar wasted on failing programs and bureaucratic bloat is a dollar taken from work-ing families.

Chris will reward hard work, slash the red tape strangling small businesses, and put Americ-a First policies to work for Michigan families.

Chris has the backbone to stand up to tax-and-spend career politicians and restore com-mon sense to state government.

This August, send Chris Moraitis to the State Senate - a commonsense Republican who will fight to drain the Lansing swamp.

By Ron Reisterer
Decatur

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Located: 60395 CR 681, Lawrence, MI

Note Early List: Tools • Antiques • New Over Stock Items • Furniture • Lawn Mowers • Quads • Stand On Skid Steer • Track Dump Trailer • New Tire Changer • John Deere Zero Turn • Lawn Equipment • Chain Saw • Backpack Blower • Tiller • Snow Blower • New Tank Top Heaters
Misc. Ammo • 1978 Eisenhower Dollar Coins.

Check BigBearAuctionCompany.com for updates • Cash/ Check with proper ID, No Credit Cards • 10% BP. Wood Side Auctions, 269-308-2230

Reap benefits of Yoga in South Haven during the winter months

Laura Flack

Bend Yoga Staff

Pam Leiter

By James Windell

You may prefer doing your yoga classes on the sandy beach in South Haven during the warm summer months, but even when the pier and the lighthouse are encrusted with snow and ice you can still reap the benefits of yoga classes.

Bend Yoga, which has been around since 2015, offers beach yoga classes. However, the yoga instructors at Bend Yoga offer indoor yoga until the weather warms up at Church of the Epiphany, 410 Erie Street, South Haven, and at 530 Phoenix Street, South Haven.

Margie Guzmán, one of the Bend Yoga instructors, says that yoga students are welcome at Church of the Epiphany every Thursday night at 7:30 pm. "We offer yoga at the church on Thursday evenings for $15 a class," she says. "But we also offer year-round private classes for individuals or groups."

Bend Yoga can be reached at 269-214-0865.

Church of the Epiphany has other yoga classes as well. On Mondays at noon, Stacy Grill Ewing conducts a Feldenkrais Awareness Through Movement class; on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:00 am, Lisa Rostar teaches Stretch Yoga; also on Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, a Hatha Yoga class is offered by Karen Barker; and on Saturdays at 9:30 am, Barker also leads a second Hatha Yoga class. Preregistration is required for some of these classes, and more information is available at the church's website at https://www.epiphanychurchsouthhaven.org/community

Over at Bronson Wellness Center, Laura Flack has three levels of yoga classes she leads for both beginners and intermediate participants.

"I teach at Bronson Wellness Center," says Flack, who is certified as a yoga instructor, "and I teach six classes a week. There are three different styles: There's a beginner yoga class, which is basic yoga, then an intermediate class, called Morning Matters, and Yin Yoga, more of a mediative, very relaxed type of yoga."

Flack's beginning yoga class is at the Bronson Wellness Center, 950 S. Bailey Avenue, South Haven, at 1:00 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Her Morning Matters class takes place at 10:00 am on Monday and Wednesdays, and her Yin Yoga class is at 10:00 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Flack says that people who are just starting out with yoga could begin with her Yin Yoga class. "Yin is really slow and it all takes place on the mat," she explains. "The beginning class is also slow and we don't do any challenging poses. I explain more about what we are doing."

Over the past three years teaching at Bronson, Laura Flack has observed that newcomers to yoga often think they are not flexible enough or that they wouldn't be able to do yoga. "But I tell them that we do a lot of modifications. and any fitness level can do yoga," she says. "I always focus on what people can do and I never want them to feel they can't do something."

She adds that once people come to the class they realize that they can do it. "They see that yoga is good for their body and their mind."

To join one of Flack's classes, you can come as a guest and pay $15. If you join the Bronson Wellness Center, then all classes are free. For more information, visit www.bronsonhealth.com/wellness-center.

An additional option is to attend one of Pam Leitner's classes at Senior Service of Van Buren County.

Leitner, who was an Occupational Therapist before beginning to teach yoga classes at Senior Services for more than six years. Teaching both Yoga and Tai Chi at Senior Services,8337 M-140, South Haven,

"I started out being very easy on the people in my classes," Leitner says. "But I realized that the people in my classes were perfectly capable of doing even more difficult poses if we eased into them."

For some people, Leitner points out, getting up and down from the floor is harder than the yoga itself. "So, we do all of our sitting and kneeling postures after eases ourselves down to the floor," she says.

"Some of my students have had point replacements," Leitner says. "I keep in mind what postures we are doing and how they could adversely affect someone who has had a joint replacement and I offer alternatives ways of doing the posture for them."

Leitner says that anyone who lives in Van Buren County can become a member of Senior Services and then can attend yoga classes at no cost.

To view a list of activities and classes, see the Senior Service website at www.seniorservices-vbc.org/south-haven

Prosecutor authorizes 41 felony cases

Misdemeanor cases authorized - 125
Felony cases authorized - 41
Authorizations by category (not all inclusive)
Absconding on Bond – Felony - 0
Assault
Misdemeanor Assault - 11
Assault with a Dangerous Weapon - 5
Resisting/Obstructing/Assaulting a Police Officer - 12
Assault with Intent to Do Great Bodily Harm - 1
Assault on Prison Employee - 2
Breaking and Entering/Home Invasion - 1
Criminal Sexual Conduct – All Degrees - 2
Child Abuse - 1
Domestic Violence
Misdemeanor - 26
Felony - 2
Fleeing and Eluding a Police Officer - 1
Larceny
Larceny/Retail Fraud – Misdemeanor - 13
Larceny/Retail Fraud – Felony - 2
Unlawful Driving Away of a Vehicle/Unlawful Use - 1
Receiving & Concealing Stolen Property - 2
Operating while impaired/intoxicated
Misdemeanor - 16
Felony - 2
Possession/Delivery of a controlled substance other than methamphetamine - 1
Possession/Delivery of Methamphetamine - 4
Weapons Charges - 6

SPEAKERS SERIES OF SOUTH HAVEN 2026
Issues, Innovations & Ideas Shaping Our Lives
Bridget Brink
U.S. Ambassador
Why do Ukraine and Eastern Europe Matter
Thursday, April 30th
Annie Blackwell
Astronomer-U of M
How Bright Lights Endanger Starry Nights
Thursday, May 14th
Dr. Tom Ludwig
Hope College
The Promises and Perils of AI
Thursday, October 22nd
Tim Alberta
Author/Journalist
The Art Of Getting Along in a Troubled Society
Thursday, Nov, 19th
Refreshments 6:30 PM
Presentations 7:00 PM
Admission $10.00 Students No Charge
Lake Michigan College, South Haven campus
Contributions-Speakers Series of South Haven, PO Box
572 South Haven, Michigan 49090
SOUTHHAVENSPEAKERSSERIES.ORG
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=• PUBLIC NOTICE •=

State of Michigan Probate Court Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case 2025-1193-DE
Judge Hon. Susan Metzger
Estate of **Catherine Marie Erick, Deceased**
Date of Birth: November 3,1941 (11/3/1941)
TO ALL CREDITORS: NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, **Catherine Marie Erick,** Deceased , died **September 3,2025 (9/3/2025).**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Jessica B. Blake**, personal representative, or to both the probate court at **212 E. Paw Paw Street, Ste. 220, Paw Paw, MI 49079** and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
January 22, 2026
Attorney:
N/A
Personal Representative:
Jessica B. Blake
P.O. Box 7038
Huntington Woods, MI 48070
313-424-8685

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: RON CRAFT; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 1/29/2026; Atty File #: 25-002098-3; Insurer: (unknown)
SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on February 26, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): RON CRAFT and SUZANNE BURROWS-CRAFT, Husband and Wife Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), solely as nominee for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: April 28, 2004 Recorded on May 11, 2004, Liber 1413, on Page 644, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON FKA THE BANK OF NEW YORK, AS TRUSTEE FOR THE CERTIFICATEHOLDERS OF THE CWABS INC., ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2004-6 Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Fifty-Five Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty-Five and 24/100 Dollars ($55,785.24)
Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: BEGINNING ON THE NORTH LINE OF CASS STREET AT A POINT 465.00 FEET EAST OF THE WEST SECTION LINE; THENCE WEST, 102.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH, 86.50 FEET; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY PARALLEL WITH MONROE STREET, 112.20 FEET; THENCE SOUTHERLY TO BEGINNING, BEING A PART OF BLOCK 8, MONROE`S ADDITION TO THE CITY OF BANGOR, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN AS RECORDED IN LIBER 1 OF PLATS, PAGE 17, VAN BUREN COUNTY RECORDS.
Commonly known as 108 E Cass St, Bangor, MI 49013
The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
The Bank of New York Mellon fka The Bank of New York, as Trustee for Certificateholders of the CWABS Inc., Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2004-6 Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C.
23938 Research Dr, Suite 300
Farmington Hills, MI 48335
248.539.7400
1583433
(01-29)(02-19)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Mark A Redfern; Atty: Johnson, Blumberg, and Associates - Johnson, Blumberg, and Associates ; 1st Pub: 1/29/2026; Atty File #: MI 26 6935; Insurer: (unknown)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in VAN BUREN County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on February 26, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
MORTGAGE INFORMATION: Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by Mark A. Redfern and Lori Redfern, husband and wife, whose address is 52757 48th Avenue, Lawrence, Michigan 49064, as original Mortgagors, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Caliber Home Loans, Inc., being a mortgage dated July 6, 2018, and recorded on July 10, 2018 in Liber 1670 Page 995, Van Buren County Records, State of Michigan and then assigned through mesne assignments to NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing, as assignee as documented by an assignment dated November 8, 2023 and recorded on November 8, 2023 in Liber 1759 Page 25, Van Buren County Records, Michigan, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of ONE HUNDRED SIXTY-SIX THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED SEVENTY-TWO AND 39/100 DOLLARS ($166,872.39).
Said premises are situated in the Township of Lawrence, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, and are described as: PART OF THE NORTHEAST FRACTIONAL QUARTER OF FRACTIONAL SECTION 4, TOWN 3 SOUTH, RANGE 15 WEST, LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN, DESCRIBED AS COMMENCING AT THE NORTH QUARTER POST OF SAID SECTION 4: THENCE EAST ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION 716.50 FEET TO THE WEST LINE OF A PARCEL OF LAND DESCRIBED IN A QUIT CLAIM DEED RECORDED IN LIBER 1133 ON PAGE 991 AND THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE LAND HEREIN DESCRIBED; THENCE CONTINUING EAST ALONG SAID NORTH LINE 15.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 40' 29" EAST, PARALLEL WITH THE NORTH AND SOUTH QUARTER LINE OF SAID SECTION 393.42 FEET; THENCE WEST PARALLEL WITH THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION 25.40 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 40' 29" EAST, PARALLEL WITH THE NORTH AND SOUTH QUARTER LINE OF SAID SECTION 390.00 FEET; THENCE EAST PARALLEL WITH THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION 458.00 FEET TO A LINE WHICH IS 1164.10 FEET EAST OF AND PARALLEL WITH THE NORTH AND SOUTH QUARTER LINE OF SAID SECTION; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 40' 29" EAST, ALONG THE LAST DESCRIBED LINE 676.565 FEET TO THE SOUTH LINE OF THE NORTH FRACTIONAL HALF OF SAID NORTHEAST FRACTIONAL QUARTER, ALSO BEING THE SOUTH LINE OF A PARCEL OF LAND DESCRIBED IN A MEMORANDUM OF LAND CONTRACT RECORDED IN LIBER 1046 ON PAGE 21; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 26' 32" WEST, ALONG SAID SOUTH LINE 488.08 FEET TO A LINE WHICH IS 676.10 FEET EAST OF AND PARALLEL WITH THE NORTH AND SOUTH QUARTER LINE OF SAID SECTION, ALSO BEING THE WEST LINE OF A PARCEL OF LAND DESCRIBED IN A WARRANTY DEED RECORDED IN LIBER 0878 ON PAGE 038 OF VAN BUREN COUNTY RECORDS; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 40' 29" WEST, ALONG THE LAST DESCRIBED LINE, 1237.233 FEET TO A LINE WHICH IS 218 FEET SOUTHERLY OF AND PARALLEL WITH THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION; THENCE EAST ALONG THE LAST DESCRIBED LINE 40.40 FEET TO A LINE WHICH IS 716.50 FEET EAST OF AND PARALLEL WITH THE NORTH AND SOUTH QUARTER LINE OF SAID SECTION, ALSO BEING THE WEST LINE OF A PARCEL OF LAND DESCRIBED IN A QUIT CLAIM DEED RECORDED IN LIBER 1133 ON PAGE 991 OF VAN BUREN COUNTY RECORDS; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 40' 29" WEST, ALONG THE FAST DESCRIBED LINE 218.00 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING. Street Address: 52757 48th Avenue, Lawrence, Michigan 49064 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA § 600.3241a in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of the sale. If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCLA § 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: IF YOU ARE A MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER ON ACTIVE DUTY, IF YOUR PERIOD OF ACTIVE DUTY HAS CONCLUDED LESS THAN 90 DAYS AGO, OR IF YOU HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO ACTIVE DUTY, PLEASE CONTACT THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PARTY FORECLOSING THE MORTGAGE AT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER STATED IN THIS NOTICE.
Dated: January 29, 2026 For more information, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing: Robert A. Blumberg (P87490), Johnson, Blumberg, & Associates, LLC, 30 North LaSalle St., Suite 3650 Chicago, Illinois, 60602. Telephone: (312) 541-9710 File No.: MI 26 6935
(01-29)(02-19)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Matthew Craig; Atty: Team X; 1st Pub: 1/29/2026; Atty File #: 527625F01; Insurer: FNMA
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on February 26, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Matthew Craig an unmarried man Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns Foreclosing Assignee (if any): NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing
Date of Mortgage: January 25, 2017
Date of Mortgage Recording: January 30, 2017
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $71,503.15
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Paw Paw, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: The Southwest 1/4 of Section 36, Town 3 South, Range 14 West, described as: beginning at the Southwest corner of said Section 36; thence North 00 degrees 28 minutes 57 seconds West, along the West line of said section, 990.0 feet; thence South 89 degrees 56 minutes 07 seconds East, 440.00 feet; thence South 00 degrees 28 minutes 57 seconds East, parallel with the West line of said section, 990.004 feet to the South line of said section; thence North 89 degrees 56 minutes 04 seconds West along said South line 440.00 feet to the place of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 35910 72nd Ave, Decatur, MI 49045-8700
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: January 29, 2026
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1582776
(01-29)(02-19)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Logan Phillips; Atty: PUBLIC NOTICE AGENCY - PUBLIC NOTICE AGENCY; 1st Pub: 1/15/2026; Atty File #: 25-017305; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM on February 12, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Logan Phillips, a single man Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Success Mortgage Partners, Inc., a Michigan Corporation Date of mortgage: April 12, 2019, Recorded on April 19, 2019, Book # 1683, on Page # 91. Foreclosing Assignee: Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC. Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: One Hundred Seventy Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty-Three 88/100 Dollars ($107,963.88)
Mortgaged premises: Located in the Township of Decatur, County of Van Buren: LOT 6, BLOCK 2, DOUGLAS LEE ADDITION TO THE VILLAGE OF DECATUR, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF, AS RECORDED IN LIBER 4 OF PLATS ON PAGE 19, VAN BUREN COUNTY RECORDS. Commonly known as 455 Douglas Dr Decatur MI 49045 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961 pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC Assignee ALAW 5404 Cypress Center Drive, Suite 300, Tampa, FL 33609 (813) 221-4743 25-017305
(01-15)(02-05)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Helen Burton; Atty: Team H; 1st Pub: 1/15/2026; Atty File #: 527692F01; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on February 19, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Helen L. Burton and Eddie J. Burton, wife and husband
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC
Date of Mortgage: May 4, 2022
Date of Mortgage Recording: May 9, 2022
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $191,261.14
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Arlington, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Beginning on the West 1/4 post of Section 18, Town 2 South, Range 15 West, Arlington Township, Van Buren County, Michigan; thence South on the West line of said Section, 589.60 feet; thence East at right angles, 515.00 feet; thence North 589.60 feet; thence West 515.00 feet to the place beginning.
Except Beginning at the West 1/4 post of Section 18, Town 2 South, Range 15 West, Arlington Township, Van Buren County, Michigan; thence South 00 degrees 07 minutes 46 seconds West on the West section line, 208.00 feet; thence South 89 degrees 26 minutes 59 seconds East, parallel with the East and West 1/4 line, 515.00 feet; thence North 00 degrees 07 minutes 46 seconds East 208.00 feet to the East and West 1/4 line; thence North 89 degrees 26 minutes 59 seconds West on same, 515.00 feet to the place of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 34315 County Road 681, Bangor, MI 49013-9776
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: January 15, 2026
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1581941
(01-15)(02-05)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Gary Phelps; Atty: Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. - Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C.; 1st Pub: 1/8/2026; Atty File #: 25MI00753-1; Insurer: (unknown)
FORECLOSURE NOTICE
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. This notice is from a debt collector.
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, February 5, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by Gary Phelps, Married Man to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Union Home Mortgage Corp., its successors and assigns, Mortgagee, dated July 23, 2018, and recorded on August 7, 2018, in Liber 1672, Page 248, Van Buren County Records, said mortgage was assigned to Nationstar Mortgage LLC by an Assignment of Mortgage dated October 10, 2023 and recorded October 13, 2023 in Liber 1758, Page 164, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Eighty-One Thousand One Hundred Sixteen and 21/100 ($81,116.21) including interest at the rate of 5.50000% per annum. Said premises are situated in the Village of Lawrence, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: Parcel Number 1: Beginning at the Northwest corner of the land formerly owned by Lucius M. Hodges, said point being 1215 feet North of the West Quarter post of Section 10, Town 3 South, Range 15 West, thence North 4 rods, thence East 12 rods, thence South 4 rods, thence West along the line of the land formerly owned by said Lucius M. Hodges to the place of beginning. Parcel Number 2: Commencing 69 rods 10 links North of the West Quarter post of Section 10, Town 3 South, Range 15 West, thence North 4 rods, thence East 12 rods, thence South 4 rods, thence West 12 rods to beginning. Commonly known as: 720 N PAW PAW ST, LAWRENCE, MI 49064 If the property is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be 6.00 months from the date of sale unless the property is abandoned or used for agricultural purposes. If the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 and/or 600.3241a, the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of sale, or 15 days after statutory notice, whichever is later. If the property is presumed to be used for agricultural purposes prior to the date of the foreclosure sale pursuant to MCL 600.3240, the redemption period is 1 year. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, if the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, the borrower(s) will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages are, if any, limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Dated: January 8, 2026 Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. Attorneys for Nationstar Mortgage LLC
43252 Woodward Avenue, Suite 180, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302, (248) 335-9200 Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Case No. 25MI00753-1
(01-08)(01-29)

NOTICE OF RESCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARING ANTWERP TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Antwerp Township Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) will hold a public hearing regarding the following appeal of a determination by the Zoning Administrator. Public comments on the matter are welcome.

Application
- Request: Appeal of the Zoning Administrator's determination that the operation of a police department practice shooting range is not permitted at the subject property.
- Zoning District: Agricultural & Open Space Residential (AG) Zoning District
- Location: 72nd Avenue
- Parcel Number: 80-02-031-011-00
- Owner/Applicant: Village of Lawton

Rescheduled Meeting and Hearing Information
- Location: Antwerp Township offices located at 24821 Front Street, Mattawan, MI 49071
- Date: Thursday, February 26, 2026
- Time: 6:30 PM
- Project Details: call (269) 668-2615

Those unable to attend the public hearing are invited to submit written comments to the attention of the ZBA Chair at the Township Hall address listed above by 4:00 PM on the meeting date. If any individual has a physical disability that may limit their participation in the hearing, please notify the Township at least five (5) days prior to the hearing so that reasonable accommodations may be made.

VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN PLANNING COMMISSION NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Village of Mattawan Planning Commission will consider a **Special Land Use Request** received from Pennzau LLC, **to allow the hosting of small weddings and private events within the existing greenhouse and outdoor garden spaces at 52650 N. Main St., Mattawan property ID # 80-46-700-032-70** in the Village of Mattawan.

1169-A31 11-3-13 721-506 745-707 1356-885 1728-934 *** COM AT NE COR OF SEC, TH S 1 DEG 20'35"W ALG E SEC L 432.50 FT TO BEG, TH CON S 1 DEG 20'35"W ALG E SEC L 334.72 FT, TH N 88 DEG 10'15"W PAR WITH S L OF NE 1/4 OF NE 1/4 OF SEC 528.0 FT, TH N 1 DEG 20'35"E PAR WITH E SEC L 336.08 FT, TH S 88 DEG 01'25"E PAR WITH N SEC L 528.0 FT TO BEG. *** SPLIT ON 07/25/2017 FROM 80-46-700-032-55 FOR 2018 TAXES.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the request will be considered by the Planning Commission at their meeting to be held on **February 18, 2026 @ 7:00 PM** for the purpose of receiving public comment regarding the proposed special land use. All interested persons will be given an opportunity to be heard.

The meeting will be held in the Village Office meeting room at the address below. Please send all written comments to:

Village of Mattawan
24221 Front Avenue
Mattawan, MI 49071
(269) 668-2128
offices@mattawanmi.com

Jolie Storm-Artis
Village Clerk
January 26, 2026

Road Commission offers winter safety tips

LAWRENCE -During the winter months, the Van Buren County Road Commission carries out many responsibilities - but none are more visible, or more critical, than snow and ice control. Snow plowing is also among the Road Commission's dangerous jobs due to limited visibility, challenging weather conditions, and heavy traffic. That's why we're asking residents - especially parents, children, and newly licensed drivers - to help us keep everyone safe this winter.

HOW YOU CAN HELP KEEP PLOWS AND PEOPLE SAFE:

Stay off snowbanks along roadways. Please do not build snow forts, make tunnels, or play on snowbanks near roads. Plows cannot see children hidden in the snow.

Keep a safe distance from the road. Stand well back from the edge of the roadway while waiting for the school bus, getting the mail, or watching plow trucks at work.

Avoid driveways when plows are approaching. Stay clear of the end of the driveway - plows may throw snow or shift unexpectedly.

Keep toys and sleds out of the roadway. Toys left near the road can slide into traffic or become dangerous obstacles.

Place garbage cans well up the driveway on snowy collection days. This helps prevent damage to cans and keeps plow routes clear.

FOR DRIVERS:

Turn on your headlights, override the automatic light control in your vehicle AND clean off your vehicle before driving. It prevents visibility obstruction for you (from snow sliding onto the windshield) and hazards for others (flying ice chunks causing crashes, damaging other cars, or blinding other drivers).

Buckle up and allow extra travel time in winter conditions.

Never attempt to pass a snowplow while it is plowing.

Do not travel beside a plow - drivers have limited visibility, especially to the rear. And plow trucks can suddenly move sideways when hitting drifting or packed snow.

Most importantly: Stay 200 feet back from the snowplow - it's the law! For a point of reference, 200 feet is roughly comparable to 13 car lengths. The law also requires drivers to stop at least 20 feet away from a snowplow stopped at an intersection. We need room to groom!

Keeping our roads safe is a shared responsibility. By working together and watching out for one another, we can help protect our children, our drivers, and the road crews who work tirelessly to keep Van Buren County moving all winter long.

BLOOMINGDALE TOWNSHIP
INVITATION TO BID

Bloomingdale Township is soliciting proposals for qualified providers to provide cemetery maintenance and Sexton services to Bloomingdale Township. The contractor must be capable and willing to provide services as outlined by the Board. Contractors can contact Bloomingdale Township, 109 E. Kalamazoo St., PO BOX 11, Bloomingdale, MI 49026 (269) 521-3800 ext 3 for further information or to obtain a bid packet.

Sealed Bids must be to Bloomingdale Township no later than 1:00pm
On March 18, 2026. The Township Board reserves the right to reject any and all sealed bids.

Melanie Kelly, Township Clerk

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Village of Paw Paw Village Council will conduct a public hearing on Monday, February 9, 2025 at 7 p.m. in the Community Room of the Paw Paw District Library, located at 609 West Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, MI 49079 for the purpose of receiving public comment regarding the potential adoption of an amendment to the Parks and Recreation Ordinance. Specifically, it would amend the size and membership of the Parks Board, the date and time of its meetings, and the responsibilities placed upon the board by the Village Council. The full text of the amendment is available for review at Village Hall. Comments regarding the proposed amendment can be given at the public hearing, or submitted in writing to the Village Clerk at k.tacy@pawpaw.net, or at Village Hall, 111 E Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079.

Sonnenberg named Student of the Month

Nominating teacher Dennis Strey said of Paw Paw Kiwanis December Student of the Month Elias Sonnenberg, "Eli's lowest grade is a 94 percent while being a key performer on our football team. This team would not have survived the 0-3 start without him. This young man is going places in a hurry. He became the leader of this group from the moment we stepped on the field. He played and practiced evert day no matter how he was feeling. A trye throwback player that you rarely get a chance to coach. He never complained about a position he was asked to play and dominated everywhere. Whether it was returning kicks, intercepting balls from quarterbacks that make the mistake of throwing in his direction, blocking, or getting the tough yards in the middle. He rushed for 742 yards on just 105 carries, scoring six touchdowns and had eight catches for 68 yards. Eli earned First Team All-Conference Defensive Back this year with 55 tackles, one sack, TFLs and four interceptions. But aside from all these great stats, he is an even better person and teammate. I am very fortunate to have gotten to know him and coach him for the last three years. Eli has been instrumental in not only our production on the field, but also what we value as a football program and school." Elias also plays on the Red Wolves' basketball team. He plans to attend Technical School to learn welding after his graduation. Shown in photo from left, Elias Sonnenberg, his mother, Jennifer, Teacher Dennis Strey and Kiwanis member Mike Toth.

Photo courtesy/Paw Paw Kiwanis Club

VILLAGE OF PAW PAW
NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING
For FISCAL YEAR MARCH 1, 2026
Through FEBRUARY 28, 2027

A Public Hearing has been scheduled for **February 9, 2026** at the Regular Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Paw Paw District Library located at 609 West Michigan Avenue in the Village of Paw Paw for the purpose of discussing adoption of the 2026-2027 budget. A copy of the budget is available for public inspection in the Clerk's Office at 111 E Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079.

The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the budget will be a subject of this hearing.

Public comment will be taken at the meeting or written comment may be provided to the Village offices prior to the meeting. Additional information regarding this public hearing is available at the Paw Paw Village Hall, 111 E. Michigan Avenue between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday or by sending a written request to P.O. Box 179, Paw Paw, MI 49079.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids should contact the Village Clerk no later than five business days prior to the meeting to ensure the provision of reasonable accommodations.

Karla Tacy, Village Clerk
Village of Paw Paw

• CLASSIFIEDS •

• WANTED •

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BANGOR, AN INDEPENDENT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, IS SEEKING A PART-TIME PASTOR to provide biblically based spiritual guidance, teachings, and sermons. Our current pastor is retiring, and we are looking to build ministries to youth, to provide a welcoming place for people of all ages, and to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Inquiries may be directed to: The pastoral search committee at: jcbabyar@yahoo.com or to: First Congregational Church of Bangor - Attn: pastoral search committee P.O. Box 127 - Bangor, MI 49013.

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• AUCTIONS •

M&K MINI-STORAGE-206 RANDOLPH ST-BANGOR, MI 49013
269-427-1217
SALE OF ABANDONED PROPERTY: #125 AMY MORTENSEN, #037 BRETT COOLEY UNLESS PAID IN FULL BY FEBRUARY 7TH, 2026 BY 9:AM.

PUBLIC AUCTION FOR 2025 NISSAN SENTRA TO BE HELD AT SPIKES SERVICE OF MATTAWAN Fri. Jan. 30th at Noon. Vin # 3N1AB8CVXSY347657 Mileage-656. Bidding will start at towing and storage charges owed - $5600.00.

• FOR SALE •

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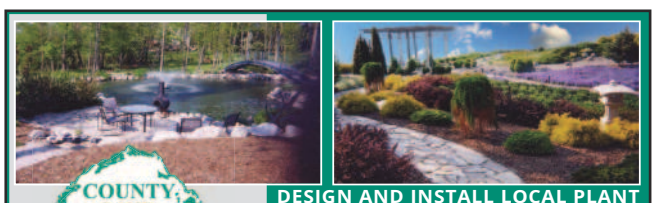
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